great wisconsin film festival

April 29—May 2, 1999

great wisconsin film festival madison, wis.
april 29-may 2, 1999

sponsored by

the independent film & video collaborative

wud WISCONSIN UNION DIRECTORATE FILM COMMITTEE

The Daily Cardinal

Madison Film Forum

ASM

WISCONSIN FILM OFFICE

UW Arts Institute

CINEMATHEQUE

All photographs are courtesy the UW Arts Institute. This film program was produced by The Daily Cardinal with the generous support of the UW Arts Institute. All content herein is the sole property of The Daily Cardinal and the UW Arts Institute.

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wisconsin center for
film and theater research

opening night

Man of the Century

DIRECTED BY ADAM ABRAHAM
USA 1999, 80 MIN., 35MM
THURSDAY, APRIL 29
9 P.M.
WISCONSIN UNION THEATER

Man of the Century centers on Johnnie Twennies, played by co-writer and co-producer Gibson Frazier.

Twennies is a young newspaper reporter in modern-day Manhattan who is convinced he is living in the 1920s. Instead of following the tradition of current indie flicks that feature depressing hipster storylines and drug-addled characters, *Man of the Century* uses the main character's inability to comprehend our modern, multicultural world to give the movie an uplifting and humorous tone, much like the great screwball comedies of the past.

Apparently, this is exactly what co-writer, co-producer and director Abraham had in mind when the movie began development in 1995.

"Why can't indie movies be happy?" Abraham asks. "There was definitely a cynicism [in independent films] that was present at the time that *Man of the Century* was an answer to."

Instead of cynicism, Abraham and Frazier looked back to classic movies of the 1930s and the kind of starry-eyed nostalgia they embodied.

"We looked for a timelessness," Abraham says. "The '20s and '30s are not connected with us today—no one around can really remember it—so it seems very fresh."

According to Abraham, not only did the timewarp add freshness to the movie, it made it seem more current than most of today's hip, of-the-moment productions.

"If you do anything of the moment, you are automatically dated," he says, referring to the time delay from filming to release that is especially evidenced in independent films. "In a funny way, if you reach so far back into the past you're actually ahead, not behind, the rest."

The secret of *Man of the Century*'s success seems to be the lengthy year spent writing and re-writing the script until it gleamed with perfection.

While one might assume such a long job would be difficult, Abraham says it was just the opposite.

"It was an extended labor of fun," he says. "We just gave ourselves a lot of time. It wasn't always writing. Sometimes we were just talking, kicking around ideas. We were under no particular pressure."

While Abraham did not find the writing and shooting of the movie all that daunting, he says he did have a hard time when there was nothing to do.

"The worst part was all the waiting around after it was finished," Abraham says. "At all other times you can keep moving forward.

SEE MAN OF THE CENTURY, PAGE 4

MAN OF THE CENTURY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

You can always find something else to do or to finish while you're waiting."

The time spent writing and waiting has paid off for Abraham and *Man of the Century*. The movie won the audience award at this year's Slamdance Film Festival, a smaller offshoot of Sundance. It has also received ample praise from critics, including raves from *aint-it-cool-news.com*, which described *Man of the Century* as a "classic piece of cinema that is so confident and executed with such perfection that tears of coolness will pour down your cheeks."

Despite the positive attention focused towards the movie, Abraham said its position at the opening of the Great Wisconsin Film Festival was a bit of a surprise.

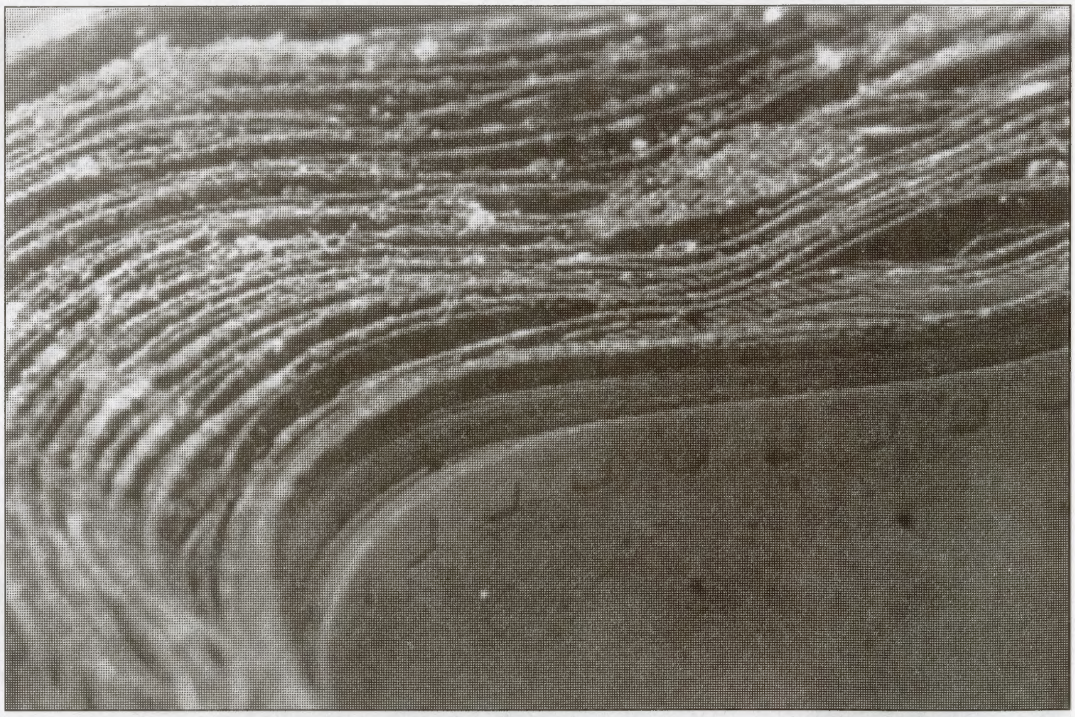
"It just kind of grew up around us," he says.

According to Abraham, they originally planned to just screen the movie in Madison because of its college-town atmosphere and openness to indie and arthouse movies.

This openness to movies with a different perspective should do well for both *Man of the Century* and the audiences that see it. Abraham says the movie strives to be fun and entertaining, and that is the message with which audiences should leave the theater.

"I'm not a fan of the moral at the end of the story," he says. "'I liked it. That was fun.' That is the moral I was aiming for."

—Bryan Ochalla



thursday april 29

Film Preservation Lecture

3:30 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

Film archivist Michael Pogorzelski of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Film Archive will discuss current issues in film restoration.

His presentation will include "before and after" reels of Frank Capra's 1928 film *The Matinee Idol*, which has recently undergone digital restoration.

Pogorzelski recently oversaw the restoration of the 1968 Best Picture winner, *Oliver!*, which was screened at the Academy in November 1998, and has also overseen work on Best Picture winners *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Amadeus* and *All the King's Men*. He has also overseen preservation of the films of experimental filmmaker Warren Sonbert in conjunction with the Guggenheim Museum and the Estate Project for Artists with AIDS. Pogorzelski attended UW-Madison and received a Master's degree in Film Studies in 1996.

The Matinee Idol

DIRECTED BY FRANK CAPRA
USA 1928, 60 MIN., 35MM
4 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

A Broadway star (Johnnie Walker) stranded in a small town is inadvertently recruited into a bit role for a stock theater company putting on a tent show. He finds himself falling for the troupe's strong-headed leader, Ginger Bolivar (Bessie Love), and he arranges for the company to open for his own show in New York. He realizes too late the effect that the cruel laughter of the sophisticated New York City audience will have on the well-meaning amateurs. Will he be able to woo Ginger once she learns her bit player is a matinee idol? This once-lost early Frank Capra feature is the first live-action film to be fully digitally restored.

silber. anniversary edition

The War at Home

DIRECTED BY
GLENN SILBER & BARRY BROWN
USA 1979, 100 MIN., 35MM
FRIDAY, APRIL 30
2:30 P.M.
FREDRIC MARCH PLAY CIRCLE

When "The War at Home" opened in Madison 20 years ago, it elicited a level of emotional response rarely realized. Moviegoers witnessed history flicker across the screen. It was not a tale that was distant and difficult to empathize with, but, in many cases, their own personal story. This look at activism on the UW-Madison campus continues to offer crucial and stirring insight into the state of the nation during the Vietnam War era.

Making "The War at Home," produced and directed jointly by Glenn Silber and Barry Alexander Brown, took four years, one that consisted of Brown digging through all of the news footage shot by a local television station from 1959 to 1970. The film took such a long time to complete that, according to the Silber, many ceased to believe it would ever be finished. Fortunately, the film was completed, allowing a vital period in the nation's history to be documented.

"It was a story that was important," Silber said. "Our lives, at that point in time, seemed to be defined, to a great deal, by the war in Vietnam."

Apparently, Silber wasn't alone in believing the period needed to be documented, as both viewers and acclaim flocked to the film.

"The War at Home" pores over a volatile period in U.S. history through the extensive use of archival television footage augmented by interviews with those who participated in the events. Silber felt that through this approach he "had a handle on a great way to do a story about this period through the whole Madison experience."

The resulting film is a cohesive and in-depth look at the state of the movement against the Vietnam War as it existed in Madison. The television footage lends the film historical credence, while the later-day interviews give the project a substantial human bent.

The movie presents itself as a valuable tool to those who have a desire to understand the not-so-distant history of both the United States and UW-Madison. Shots of the campus appear wholly alien to those familiar only with the present-day state of UW-Madison.

From the images of the bombed-out Army Math Research Center in Sterling Hall, to the film capturing riot police attacking students who were protesting the presence of Dow Chemical Company on campus, "The War at Home" allows the viewer to witness the university as it was in a less serene time.

"The War at Home" showcases Madison and the UW-Madison campus as they were 20 years ago. The film offers an invaluable look at the history of the nation and reminds the viewer that Wisconsin's capital has played an integral part in that history.

Michael Wilmington of the Chicago Tribune will introduce the film Friday; Silber will introduce the film Saturday (see page 10).

—Brian Gettler

friday april 30

Outer and Inner Space

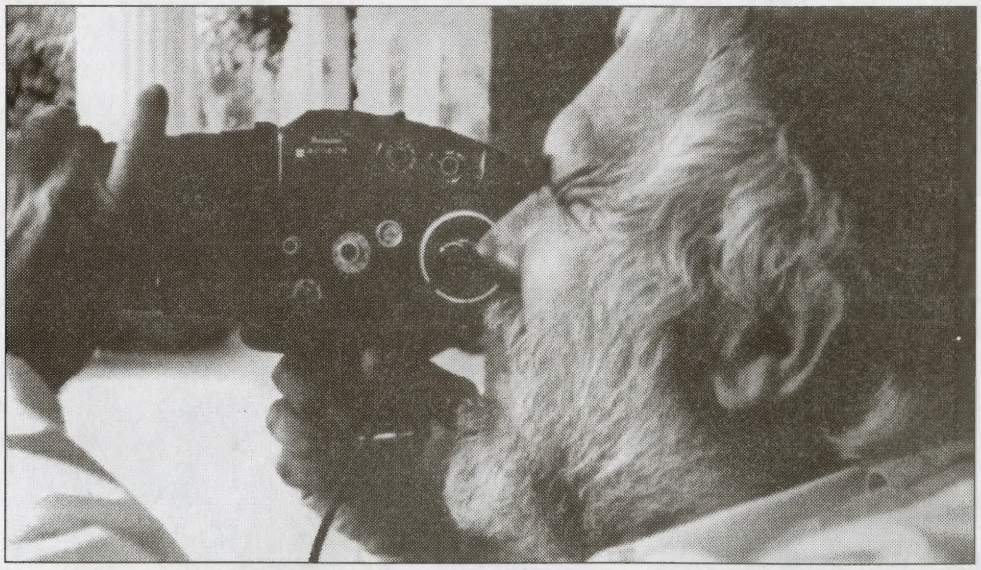
DIRECTED BY ANDY WARHOL
USA 1965, 35 MIN., 16MM
12:30 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

Andy Warhol's first dual-screen projection film, recently restored by the Museum of Modern Art in collaboration with the Whitney Museum. On each screen, Warhol superstar Edie Sedgwick interviews someone outside the frame, while a video monitor simultaneously displays another image of Sedgwick, also interviewing someone off-screen. *Outer and Inner Space* is both a continuation of Warhol's earlier silkscreen portrait work of celebrities like Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe, and an extension of his cinema into an exciting new realm of formal possibilities.

Warren Sonbert Program One

2:30 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

Restored prints of films by the late experimental filmmaker Sonbert, presented by former UW graduate student Michael Pogorzelski, now an archivist for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Balancing narrative and experimental filmmaking techniques, Sonbert's films comprise a fragmented and melancholy chronicle of urban-bohemian life in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Sonbert's later works refine this documentary quality and take up the preoccupation with highly formal structure, which was central to film and other visual arts in the 1970s.



Brakhage

DIRECTED BY JIM SHEDDEN
CANADA 1998, 75 MIN., 16MM
5 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

Jim Shedden's documentary, which was featured at the 1999 Sundance Film Festival, explores the life and art of Stan Brakhage, one of the most prolific and influential avant-garde filmmakers of all time. The film chronicles Brakhage's intense commitment to experimental film that has consumed his life for the past 45 years. The film intermingles footage from several of Brakhage's important and controversial works, interviews with fellow filmmakers and scholar and filmed anecdotes by avant-garde filmmakers George Kuchar and Jonas Mekas.

The Crimson Kimono

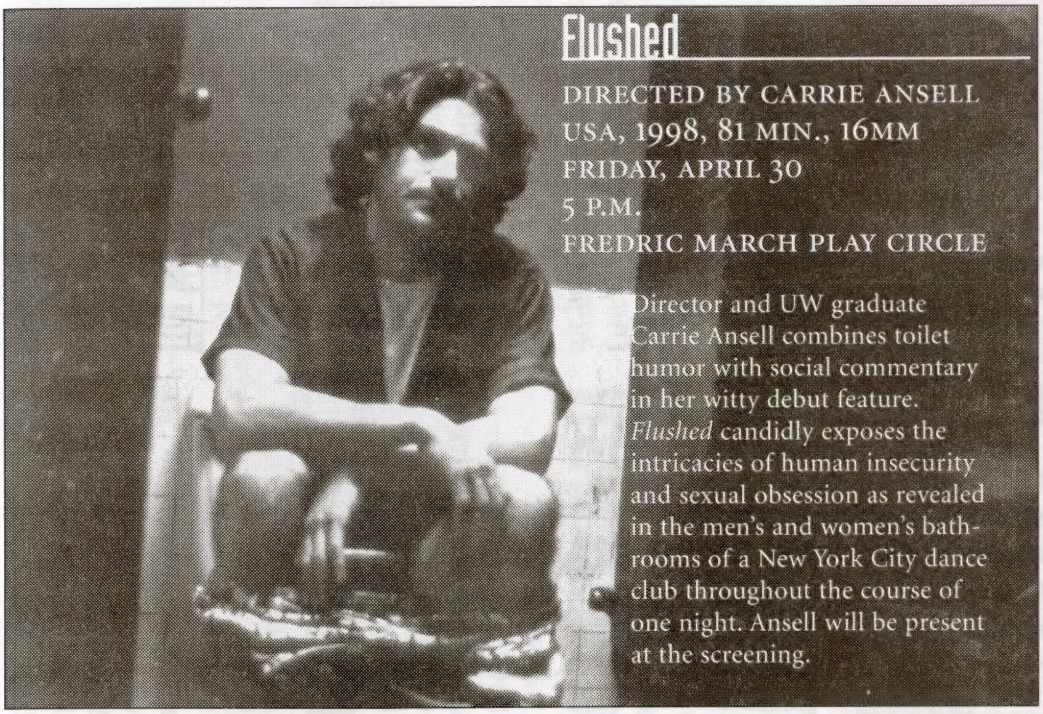
DIRECTED BY SAMUEL FULLER
USA 1955, 82 MIN., 35MM
7:30 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

Recently restored print of a hard-boiled detective classic by the late B-movie maverick Samuel Fuller. While investigating the murder of a stripper, two Los Angeles detectives become embroiled in a love triangle that threatens to derail the case. Although unfairly marginalized in American film history, Fuller's tough and scrappy films inspired such internationally acclaimed auteurs as Jean-Luc Godard (whose *Pierrot Le Fou* featured a cameo by Fuller) and Wim Wenders.

Student Film and Video Screening

9:30 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

A program of recent films by UW students, many of which have been featured at film festivals, including *Images From the Great Mascararama* by Anna Benavides, *Daughter's Red* by Ting-yi Lin, *Dot to Dot* by Kathleen Lorden, *Scratching Out* by Sarah Skiles and *Roar Kitty Roar* by Michael Velliquette. Curated by James Kreul of the UW Cinematheque.



Flushed

DIRECTED BY CARRIE ANSELL
USA, 1998, 81 MIN., 16MM
FRIDAY, APRIL 30
5 P.M.
FREDRIC MARCH PLAY CIRCLE

Director and UW graduate Carrie Ansell combines toilet humor with social commentary in her witty debut feature. *Flushed* candidly exposes the intricacies of human insecurity and sexual obsession as revealed in the men's and women's bathrooms of a New York City dance club throughout the course of one night. Ansell will be present at the screening.

saturday may 1

The Cruise

DIRECTED BY BENNETT MILLER
USA 1998, 76 MIN., 35MM
FRIDAY, APRIL 30
7:30 P.M.
FREDRIC MARCH PLAY CIRCLE

A revealing portrait of New York City as seen through the eyes of Timothy "Speed" Levitch, a neurotic yet inspirational tour guide. Levitch's double-decker bus tours treat unsuspecting tourists to philosophical rants, inflated statistical information and tidbits that reveal a "typical" New Yorker's love-hate relationship with the city. This film will show again at 9:30 p.m. Sunday.

Treasure Island

DIRECTED BY SCOTT KING
USA 1998, 86 MIN., 35MM
FRIDAY, APRIL 30
9:30 P.M.
FREDRIC MARCH PLAY CIRCLE

Equipped with a short newsreel and cliffhanger serial episode circa 1945, *Treasure Island* intertwines the stories of two WWII counterintelligence offices involved in a secret project: planting fake letters on a corpse to funnel misinformation back to the Japanese. Glimpses into the personal lives of the codebreakers reveal their psychosexual fears, while the nonlinear narrative blurs the line between what's personal and what's professional. Winner of the Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival. Actor Lance Baker will be present at the screening. This film will show again at 5:30 p.m. Sunday.

Homestead Artifact

DIRECTED BY KENT HAYWARD
USA 1998, 49 MIN., VIDEO
2:30 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

Former UW student Kent Hayward's documentary follows the filmmaker's investigation of his family history in New Mexico. Shortly after the death of his grandfather, who was the son of homesteaders, Hayward traveled to New Mexico to unearth the repressed history of his family's frustrated attempts to raise cattle. Along with his grandmother, Hayward traces out the bitter experience and emerges with a powerful personal history of the American West. Hayward will be present at the screening.

Flat is Beautiful

DIRECTED BY SADIE BENNING
USA 1998, 50 MIN., VIDEO

Shulie

DIRECTED BY ELISABETH SUBRIN
USA 1997, 38 MIN., VIDEO
5 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

Sadie Benning's experimental videos, which she makes with a Fisher Price "pixelvision" camera (a toy camera that records images on audiocassette), address adolescent fantasy, sexuality and suburban boredom. *Flat is Beautiful*, which blends live action and animation, delves into the frustration and confusion of a friendship/love affair between two young girls.

Director Elisabeth Subrin's *Shulie* is a shot-for-shot and line-for-line remake of a 1967 documentary film about art student and feminist Shulamith Firestone (who wrote the influential text "The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution"). *Shulie* won the 1998 Los Angeles Critics' Award for best experimental film.

great wisconsin film festival

1999 festival schedule

thursday april 29

vilas communications hall

3:30 P.M.

Film Preservation Lecture

MICHAEL POGORZELSKI
ARCHIVIST, ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES

UW alum Pogorzelski will speak about issues in modern restoration.

4 P.M.

The Matinee Idol

FRANK CAPRA, 1922

Country and city folk clash in this digitally restored screwball romance.

wisconsin union theater

9 P.M.

Man of the Century

ADAM ABRAHAM, 1999

A journalist convinced it's the 1920s tries to make sense of '90s culture in this Slamdance Audience Award Winner. Abraham and actor Cara Buono will be present.

friday april 30

vilas communications hall

12:30 P.M.

Outer and Inner Space

ANDY WARHOL, 1965

Fresh from restoration, a dual-screen extravaganza from the pop provacateur.

2:30 P.M.

Warren Sonbert program one

A collection of restored prints from a pioneer of experimental filmmaking. Continued Saturday.

fredric march play circle

2:30 P.M.

The War at Home

GLENN SILBER & BARRY BROWN, 1979

A celebrated, powerful exploration of Vietnam-era America shot in Madison. Presented by Chicago Tribune film critic Michael Wilmington.

5 P.M.

Flushed

CARRIE ANSELL, 1998

Insecurity, obsession and other idiosyncracies are exposed in the bathrooms of a dance club. UW alum Ansell will be present.

7:30 P.M.

The Cruise

BENNETT MILLER, 1998

vilas communications hall

12:30 P.M.

Warren Sonbert program two

A continuation of Friday's screenings.

2:30 P.M.

Homestead Artifact

KENT HAYWARD, 1998

A former UW student explores his family's past in the American West. Hayward will be present.

5 P.M.

Flat is Beautiful

SADIE BENNING, 1998

Shulie

ELISABETH SUBRIN, 1998

Two girls' undefinable relationship shapes "Flat is Beautiful;" "Shulie" recreates the 1967 documentary about feminist thinker Shulamith Firestone.

fredric march play circle

12 P.M.

Film Society Lecture

MICHAEL WILMINGTON
FILM CRITIC, CHICAGO TRIBUNE

UW alum Wilmington will speak on the past and future of film societies.

1.30 P.M.

The Gee Whiz Kid

JANICE DURAND, 1998

Jack Nyberg, salesman extraordinaire, tries to keep the dwindling pitch business alive in this documentary. Durand will be present.

4 P.M.

The War at Home

GLENN SILBER & BARRY BROWN, 1979

Documentarian Glenn Silber returns to Madison for the twentieth

5 P.M.

Brakhage

JIM SHEDDEN, 1998

Straight from Sundance, a look into the life and work of avant garde filmmaking icon Stan Brakhage.

7:30 P.M.

The Crimson Kimono

SAMUEL FULLER, 1955

The fiery filmmaker turns his lens on a tragic love triangle by way of race relations and murder.

9:30 P.M.

Student Film and Video

A sampling of the best works from UW students in recent years.

While the charismatic and off-kilter Timothy "Speed" Levitch shows New York City to tourists, Miller shows Levitch to us.

9:30 P.M.

Treasure Island

SCOTT KING, 1999

This thoroughly nontraditional narrative explores the personal and professional lives of two Allied counterintelligence officers. Lead actor Lance Baker will be present.

elvehjem museum of art

7:30 P.M.

The Spider's Stratagem

BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI, 1970

This confounding murder mystery is one of the most beautifully photographed films of all time.

THIS FILM PRESENTED BY BLOWUP CINEMA.

saturday may 1

7:30 P.M.

Troika

JENNIFER MONTGOMERY, 1998

Three disparate sources are bound together in this meditation on language and power. Montgomery will be present.

10 P.M.

dresden

BEN SPETH, 1998

A hauntingly shot portrait of a dissatisfied dancer and the Manhattan she inhabits. Speth will be present.

anniversary of his celebrated, powerful exploration of Vietnam-era America shot in Madison.

7:30 P.M.

The Dancemaker

MATTHEW DIAMOND, 1998

Choreographer Paul Taylor's effort to stage "Piazzolla Caldera" is chronicled in this Academy Award-nominated documentary.

9:30 P.M.

The Cruise

BENNETT MILLER, 1998

While the charismatic and off-kilter Timothy "Speed" Levitch shows New York City to tourists, Miller shows Levitch to us.

venues and locations

VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL
Room 4070, 821 University Ave.

WISCONSIN UNION THEATER
First floor, Memorial Union, 800 Langdon St.

FREDRIC MARCH PLAY CIRCLE
Second floor, Memorial Union, 800 Langdon St.

ELVEHJEM MUSEUM OF ART
Room L160, 800 University Ave.

ADMISSION TO ALL EVENTS IS FREE. SEATING IS LIMITED.

For greater detail, including parking information, please see the map on the back cover. For more information, contact the Communication Arts Department Office at 262-2277.

sunday may 2

vilas communications hall

3 P.M.

Roundtable Discussion

Those most concerned about the future of film exhibition in downtown Madison will be in attendance to discuss the forthcoming radical changes in the town's film culture.

5:30 P.M.

Treasure Island

SCOTT KING, 1999

This thoroughly non-traditional narrative explores the personal and professional lives of two Allied counterintelligence officers.

elvehjem museum of art

1 P.M.

15 Rules of Comedy

JIM ABRAHAMS
FILMMAKER

"Airplane!" and "The Naked Gun" co-creator Abrahams will speak and present excerpts from his films.

Troika

DIRECTED BY JENNIFER MONTGOMERY
USA 1998, 96 MIN., 16MM
SATURDAY, MAY 1
7:30 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

Critically acclaimed filmmaker Jennifer Montgomery (*Art for Teachers of Children*) recreates a bizarre Playboy Magazine interview with a lecherous Russian political figure, interwoven with scenes from the journalist's private life and the sound of a Russian language instruction tape. As the film unfolds, the two apparently unrelated narratives resonate with one another as they raise issues of language, communication, sexuality and power. Montgomery will be present at the screening.

dresden

DIRECTED BY BEN SPETH
USA 1998, 80 MIN., 16MM
SATURDAY, MAY 1
10 P.M.
VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

Ben Speth's quiet, often lyrical film follows a vaguely discontented dancer as she goes through the motions of her life. A loose narrative appears on and off amid strikingly filmed sequences of daily life in Manhattan, which Speth's spare stylistic approach renders bleak, haunting and often beautiful. The film was featured at the 1999 Sundance Film Festival and the 1999 New York Underground Film Festival. Speth will be present at the screening.

The War at Home

DIRECTED BY GLENN SILBER
USA 1979, 100 MIN., 35MM
SATURDAY, MAY 1
2:30 P.M.
FREDRIC MARCH PLAY CIRCLE

The 20th-anniversary celebration of the film that shaped American culture with its powerful chronology of violent anti-war protests over a 10-year period. Using the city of Madison as a paradigm for the political turmoil of the 1960s, Glenn Silber and Barry Brown's *The War at Home* portrays the growing resistance to American intervention in Vietnam via newsreel, home-movie footage and interviews with key figures such as Paul Soglin, who later became mayor of Madison, and Karl Armstrong, the convicted bomber of the Army Math Research Center. Michael Wilmington of the Chicago Tribune will introduce the film. (See page 5 for an interview with Silber.)

The Dancemaker

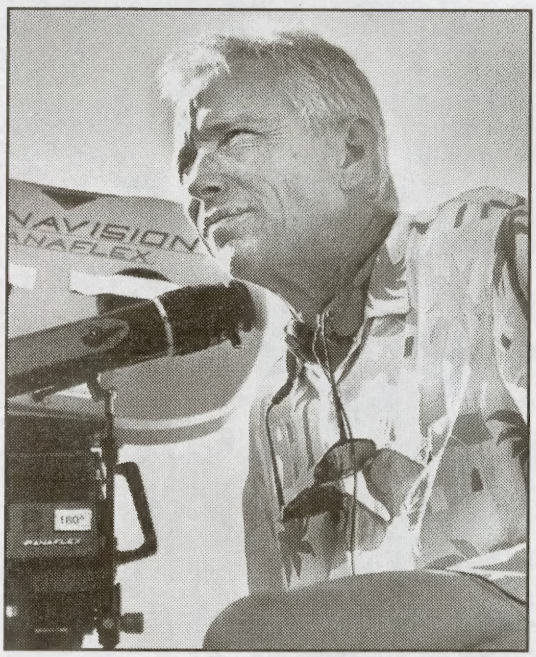
DIRECTED BY MATTHEW DIAMOND
USA 1998, 98 MIN., 35MM
SATURDAY, MAY 1
7:30 P.M.
FREDRIC MARCH PLAY CIRCLE

As one of the foremost choreographers of the 20th century, Paul Taylor has created a stunning body of work over the last 40 years. *The Dancemaker*, nominated for this year's Academy Award for Best Feature-Length Documentary, examines Taylor's vision, alternating between stage and backstage and focusing on the members of the company as much as Taylor himself. Interviews with current and past dancers give a glimpse of the pain, joy, obsession and love that motivate the artists, and the film culminates in rehearsals and eventual New York City premiere of a recent tango piece entitled *Piazzolla Caldera*.

Jim Abrahams Presentation

SUNDAY, MAY 2
1 P.M.
ROOM L160, ELVEHJEM MUSEUM OF ART

Jim Abrahams, who served as writer, producer or director on such films as *Airplane!*, *Top Secret!* and *The Naked Gun*, will present *15 Rules of Comedy*, a lecture illustrated with video clips from his films. Abrahams and his longtime friends Jerry and David Zucker, with whom he collaborated on those and other memorable comedies, founded the storefront comedy troupe Kentucky Fried Theatre while attending the University of Wisconsin. After moving out west, Abrahams and the Zuckers adapted their work into the 1977 cult hit *Kentucky Friend Movie* and the rest, as they say, is history. Sponsored by the Wisconsin FIlm office.



Madison's Film Society

SATURDAY, MAY 1
12 P.M.
FREDRIC MARCH PLAY CIRCLE

Chicago Tribune film critic Mike Wilmington and other veterans of Madison's film community during the 1970s will discuss the tradition they helped create and suggest possible directions for the future.

discovery of an unlikely hero

The Gee Whiz Kid

DIRECTED BY JANICE DURAND
USA 1998, 86 MIN., 16MM
SATURDAY, MAY 1
2 P.M.
FREDRIC MARCH PLAY CIRCLE

Fair fever.

Quite an unusual source of inspiration, yet Madison-based filmmaker Janice Durand admits that she is afflicted with it.

"I just love fairs," Durand says. "I can't tell you why, and it's a mystery to all my friends. They think I'm nuts, but I am really turned on by walking into a fairground."

Secrets revealed, it's not hard to imagine how Durand met Jack Nyberg, a nomadic auction pitchman and the subject of her debut film, *The Gee Whiz Kid*. Shot over a span of five years, the documentary follows Jack through the fair circuit as he practices his art: the "pitch," a sales show intended to seduce fairgoers and empty their unwitting pockets.

Durand first encountered Jack, the Gee Whiz Kid, at a fair in her native town of Chippewa Falls, Wis., in 1991. She filmed Jack for two years before he acquiesced and agreed to make *The Gee Whiz Kid*.

Durand says that in that time, her approach to the project changed significantly.

"It took a year to convince Jack to participate because he was afraid of a smear job," Durand says. "I started with an academic approach that was distant and ended up getting very personally involved, in a sense, studying one man's life—what made him tick, his pains, his pleasures, rather than the intellectual approach. He may be an unusual guy, but his pain is like everybody else's pain."

For Jack, pain is the complication and fatigue of constantly being on the road, frustrated by and addicted to his remarkable occupation.

"Jack is a very unlikely hero. A white Anglo-Saxon male is not the underdog of our time," Durand says.

Jack's story furnishes quite the debut for an amateur, but for Durand, the project offered an opportunity to break in the skills she learned during her brief schooling—a three-day course in filmmaking.

"I am self-taught. The best way to learn is to just do it," she says. "I could have gone to film school, but it didn't play out for me at my age with my interests. I could never make a living at it, but I will keep doing it."

Ever entrepreneurial, Durand also owns and operates Little Luxuries, located at 214 State St., a shop she founded to satisfy her need for beauty and escape from otherwise tiresome business work.

Although Durand says filming *The Gee Whiz Kid* was draining, she takes seriously both the experience and filmmaking as a craft.

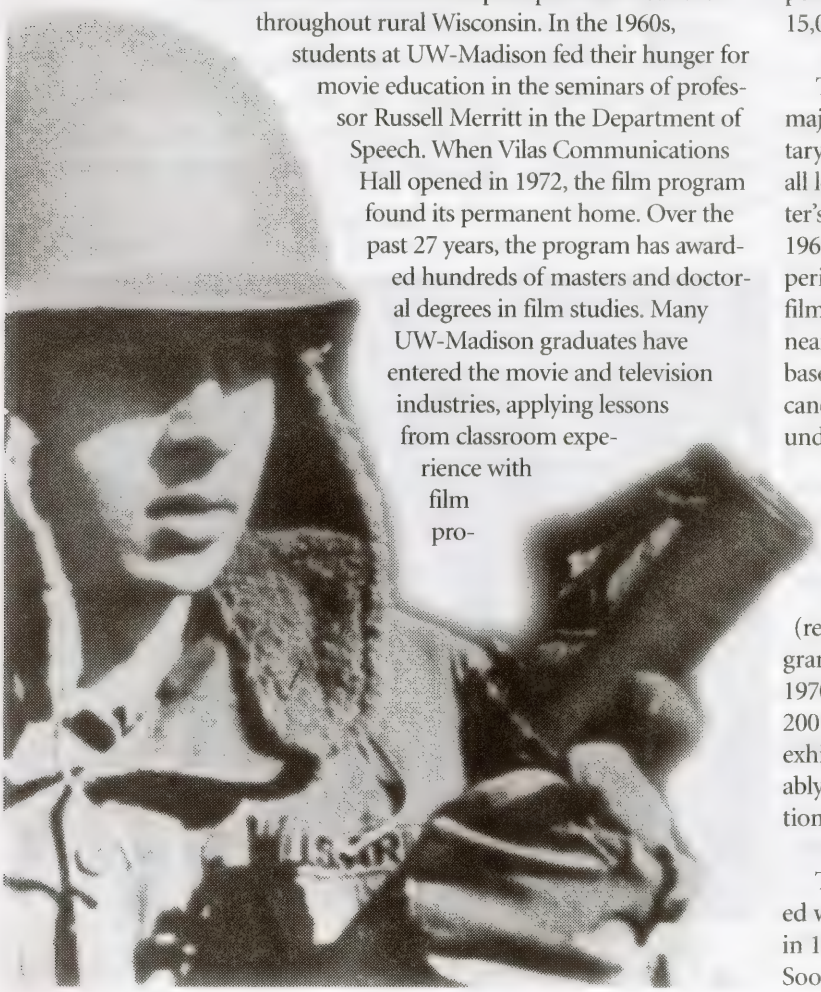
"I do not see this as a hobby—this is too hard to be a hobby," she says. "This is hell. It's 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent sweat and pain. This is the hardest thing I ever did, but it was the best thing I did in my life."

—Colleen Jungbluth

a brief history of madison film culture

Film appreciation on the UW-Madison campus certainly predates the introduction of film studies as part of the Department of Communication Arts in 1971. Still, it is difficult to imagine Madison film culture as it has evolved over the last three decades without the intellectual support and nurturance of the university's world-renowned film program.

UW-Extension sponsored film-appreciation classes as early as the middle 1950s. These courses helped spread film culture throughout rural Wisconsin. In the 1960s, students at UW-Madison fed their hunger for movie education in the seminars of professor Russell Merritt in the Department of Speech. When Vilas Communications Hall opened in 1972, the film program found its permanent home. Over the past 27 years, the program has awarded hundreds of masters and doctoral degrees in film studies. Many UW-Madison graduates have entered the movie and television industries, applying lessons from classroom experience with film production. Others, building upon their knowledge of motion-picture history, theory and criticism, have become top professors in the discipline.



The Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research

Film students at UW-Madison have for decades forged their scholarly reputations through original research conducted at the State Historical Society's Center for Film and Theater Research, a national repository of performing-arts materials. The center's collections consist of more than 15,000 films, making it the fourth-largest film archive in the United States.

The center houses a broad range of film-related materials, including major collections of post-WWII Soviet films, avant-garde and documentary shorts and papers and correspondence from individuals working at all levels of the film and television industries. The cornerstone of the center's holdings is the United Artists Collection, donated by the studio in 1969. The collection includes UA's corporate records encompassing the period from the studio's founding in 1919 to 1951, as well as pre-1948 film libraries from Warner Bros., RKO and Monogram Pictures: a total of nearly 1,700 sound features and more than 1,000 pressbooks. Research based on the UA Collection, in particular, expressed in dozens of now-canonical scholarly books, has forever changed the discipline's understanding of the workings of the American film industry.

WUD, Wisconsin Film Society and campus film mid-century

Movie exhibition on campus dates back to 1939 and the opening of Memorial Union's Wisconsin Union Theater and Play Circle (rededicated as the Fredric March Play Circle in 1976). Union film programming has remained a constant over the years. Indeed, until the early 1970s, when the Wisconsin Union Directorate was booking more than 200 movies annually, the union was the UW's sole outlet for 35mm film exhibition. With the union's assistance, Madison film culture has been ably sustained by a thriving network of campus film societies—organizations that screen classic, avant-garde or otherwise hard-to-find movies.

The godfather of these groups, the Wisconsin Film Society, originated with a documentary series shown at the Madison Hillel Foundation in 1948. Audience response to this one-shot event was overwhelming. Soon, the newly constituted society was overseeing seven screenings per

semester. Madison audiences watched and discussed the silent masterworks of foreign directors Fritz Lang and Sergei Eisenstein, revisited classic American comedies and horror movies and acquainted themselves with new trends in short filmmaking. WFS membership grew exponentially throughout the 1950s under the guidance of faculty adviser Cameron Macauley, growing to more than 500 by the end of the decade. Members could run for posts on the executive board or write program notes for individual films. WFS program notes attained national exposure in the '50s, circulating among member organizations of the American Federation of Film Societies. In addition, WFS published two volumes of these notes in the early 1960s, "Film Notes" and "Classics of the Film"-both edited by Arthur Lennig and published by the Wisconsin Film Society Press.

Campus film activity in the late 1960s and 1970s

UW-Madison in the late '60s and early '70s is usually remembered as a locus of campus unrest and social tumult, yet the student body's passion for protest was nearly matched by its passion for movies. Throughout this period, a Madison resident could choose from a slate of movies both heralded and unheralded practically every night. The Play Circle screened films six nights a week—arty European fare on weeknights, popular and cult favorites on weekends. WUD even exported exhibition to the greater community, showing films in Eagle Heights and on Mifflin Street. Dozens of film societies proliferated, with exotic names like Green Lantern or Fertile Valley. The more conservatively-monickered Wisconsin Film Society continued to be a top draw during this era but was outmatched by Focus Films, an organization founded in collaboration with campus residence-hall associations. Focus, located in Commerce (now Ingraham) Hall, screened 16mm prints of newer films three nights a week and free of charge to residence-hall dwellers.

Outside of their participation in the societies and on the WUD film committee, local film aficionados found additional ways to express their love of cinema. Would-be filmmakers formed production collectives. The most famous of these was the Film-Makers' Co-op, founded in 1972 by Glenn Silber, the future director of the Oscar-nominated documentary on Madison's anti-war movement, "The War At Home." Future feature film directors like Stuart Gordon ("Re-Animator"), Jim Abrahams and David and Jerry Zucker ("Airplane!," "The Naked Gun") initially exercised their artistic ambitions via free-form theatrical productions in the Play Circle. Critics and journalists located their own creative outlets, whether writing for The Daily Cardinal, the campus newspaper, or for The Velvet Light Trap, the Madison-based film journal founded by Russell Campbell in 1971 (and continues to this day). The Velvet Light Trap provided a forum for many writers who went on to achieve national prominence as film historians (Joseph McBride, Patrick McGilligan) or reviewers (Michael Wilmington of the Chicago Tribune).

Campus film culture today

Faced with tightening budgets and competition from home video, many of the UW film societies died out by the early 1990s. As of late, however, campus film groups have staged a major comeback, lending Madison film culture the kind of exposure it has lacked since the 1970s.

The spirit of the Film-Makers' Co-op lives on in the activities of the Independent Film and Video Collaborative and in the frequent exhibitions of the film and video work of communication arts undergraduates. Stalwarts like Dollar Cinema, Cugat Film Society and WFS itself closed up shop in the early '90s; the last of them, Focus Films, continued under the auspices of the Wisconsin Union Directorate before poor sales forced it closure. WUD, through series like Memorial Union Movies and Starlight Cinema, continues to program new, classic and offbeat films weekly. WUD achieved a prestigious coup in 1995 when, alongside the Madison Civic Center, it sponsored the Library of Congress' inaugural film preservation project, the National Film Registry tour, whose events included a lecture by James Earl Jones and a screening of a restored print of Stanley Kubrick's "2001." Most recently, the 1997 founding of the UW Cinematheque, which regularly screens hard-to-see films in 4070 Vilas Communications Hall (including the more experimental offerings of the student-run Madison Film Forum), has proven to be a boon for local moviegoers. It is hoped that the Cinematheque's cooperation with the first Great Wisconsin Film Fest will raise awareness of Madison's film heritage to even greater heights.

—Christopher Sieving

sunday may 2

festival roundtable

3 P.M.
4070 VILAS COMMUNICATIONS HALL

This roundtable is open to the public to attain feedback for future Great Wisconsin Film Festivals, but it also serves as a forum to discuss the recent changes in Madison theater ownership and how they will affect downtown film exhibition.

Moderator:
Mary Carbine, Wisconsin Public Television.
Roundtable participants:
Meri Joy Endrizzi, manager of the Orpheum Theatre
Henry Doane, new owner of the Orpheum Theatre
James Kreul, Cinematheque and Madison Film Forum coordinator
Wendi Weger, Starlight Cinema coordinator
Michael Wilmington, Chicago Tribune film critic

festival coordinators

UW Arts Institute

The University of Wisconsin-Madison Arts Institute is an interdisciplinary administrative unit governed by the arts faculty and staff. It is dedicated to promoting the arts at the university by sponsoring interdisciplinary conferences, exhibits, performances and artist residencies, by administrating arts fellowships and awards, and by facilitating interarts activities.

Cinematheque

Cinematheque is a coalition of academic departments and student film groups and is curated by professor Lea Jacobs in the communication arts department. The group hosts free screenings every Friday and Saturday and occasionally on Sunday. This semester, Cinematheque completed a series on screwball comedies and a retrospective on filmmaker Robert Bresson. For the Cinematheque screening schedule, visit the Web site at *www.wisc.edu/commarts/events/cinema.htm*, catch a Cinematheque presentation in 4070 Vilas Communications Hall, 821 University Ave., or call the Communication Arts department at 262-2277 to receive more information.

Wisconsin Union Directorate Film Committee

WISCONSIN UNION DIRECTORATE FILM COMMITTEE

The Wisconsin Union Directorate Film Committee has been programmed by students since 1939. By hosting free and cheap screenings throughout the week, the WUD film committee brings to campus a variety of films. Each weekend, Memorial Union Movies shows recent releases, while Starlight Cinema screens alternative and socially aware films every Thursday night. A handful of other film committees are committed to bringing favorite, independent and international films onto campus as well. The 24-Hour Film Hotline, which lists films to be shown by the committee in the current week, can be reached at 262-6333, or listings can be found on the committee's Web site, *http://rso.union.wisc.edu/wud/web/film/film.html.*

The Independent Film and Video Collaborative

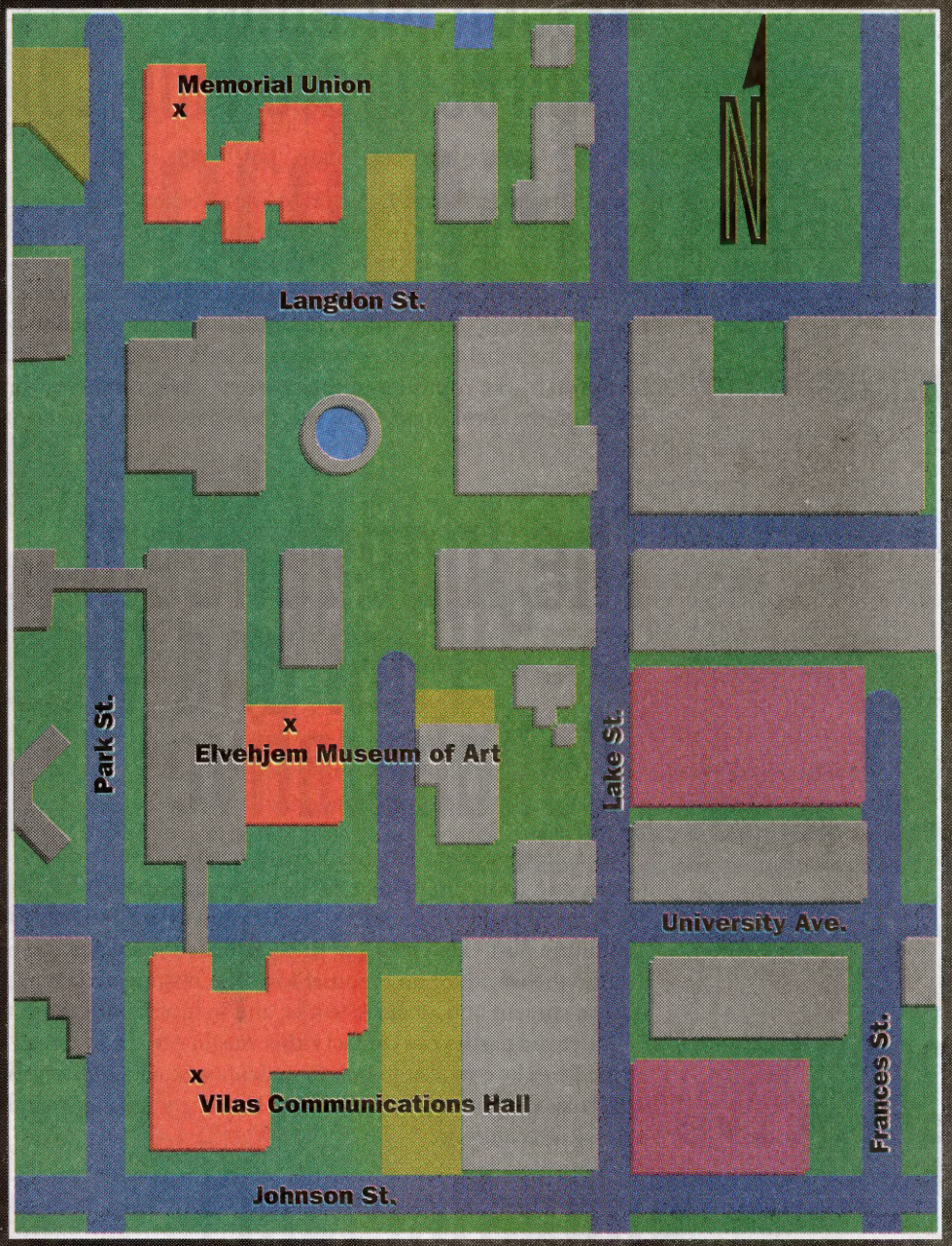
the independent film & video collaborative

The Independent Film and Video Collaborative is a collection of UW-Madison students, faculty and community members who are interested in the worlds of film and video. The IFVC membership includes filmmakers and avid film fans who gather to discuss past, present and future film/video projects; to coordinate the solicitation of film professionals from around the world for an eventual Madison hosting; to arrange public screenings for otherwise unseen student and amateur works; and to learn more about the Madison film community.

Interested parties can contact either Austin Alward by e-mail at adalward@students.wisc.edu or Joe Beres by e-mail at jmberes@students.wisc.edu. Meetings are every Thursday at 6 p.m. in 3155 Vilas Communications Hall, 821 University Ave., or visit the Web site at *www.sit.wisc.edu/~ifvc.*

Madison Film Forum

The Madison Film Forum is a film committee that was cofounded by James Kreul in 1995. Run by a group of graduate students in the communication arts department, the group is dedicated to bringing in films that otherwise would not be screened in Madison. Those interested can contact Kreul at 263-3998 or visit the Web site at *www.sit.wisc.edu/~madfilm.*



great wisconsin film festival

April 29—May 2, 1999
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wis.

Legend

- festival venue
- parking lot
- metered parking

Scanned from the collections of the
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